

Alapocas Run State Park's Can-Do Playground to celebrate 10th anniversary

WILMINGTON –DNREC's Division of Parks & Recreation and the Wilmington Area Rotary Club's Community Fund will host a 10th anniversary celebration of the Can-Do Playground in Alapocas Run State Park from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Saturday, July 15. The celebration, open to the public, will feature family-friendly activities, including a "Nature on the Go" cart and the Brandywine Traveling Zoo, along with free giveaways for the first 200 guests.

The festivities are also designed to unveil plans to the public for the Can-Do Playground's nature-themed expansion. The state's first barrier-free public playground, the Can-Do Playground promotes cooperative play between children with and without disabilities, and engages them in a wide range of activities essential to their social, emotional, cognitive and physical development.

The Can-Do Playground's expansion, scheduled to begin in September, will:

- Add additional pieces of nature-themed interpretive equipment aimed at improving the play experience of children with intellectual disabilities and those with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder;
- Enhance the parent-child bonding experience with "expression swings," configured with a face-to-face design;
- Replace play components worn by weather and use with panels that add auditory, tactile, and visual experiences throughout the playground;
- Optimize the rubberized surface to ensure ease of access

for children with mobility disabilities; and

- Add an accessible area for picnic tables and ground level music activities.

For the past decade, Rotary has remained actively involved in stewardship of the playground and will now fundraise for the expansion with its principal partner, DNREC's Division of Parks & Recreation. With grant awards from the Longwood and Welfare Foundations and the opportunity for the project to be showcased on the National Recreation and Parks Association crowdfunding platform, the club hopes to reach its \$245,000 goal for the expansion.

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